

IRAN'S POLICIES DURING WORLD WAR II

a highly fluid character. Evidence of concrete programs that would indicate political differences was totally lacking. However, in the course of 1944, when political cleavage between the growing Tudeh party and the conservative elements of the nation became more acute, one could perceive a gradual tendency* toward crystallization of the blocs and a movement toward greater stability in the Majlis. It seemed that the Communist menace awakened the deputies to the necessity for stronger organization. Hence in August, 1944, the parliamentary factions *Azadi* (Liberal), *Mihan* (Fatherland), and *Ittikad-i-Melli* (National Union) formed a common bloc in order to create a stable majority. It was estimated to comprise eighty deputies. The new bloc did not publish any program, but one could assume that its members represented conservative elements. Despite this fact the conservative and nationalist group of Seyyid Zia ed-Din did not join the bloc, although it was reported that some of Zia's partisans belonged to each of the above-mentioned factions. The creation of the bloc was commented upon favorably by the press as an indication of progress in the parliamentary life of Iran. The *Journal de Tehran*, published and edited by the deputy Javad Massudi, wrote on September 24, 1944, that for the first time in the history of the Majlis an "official" majority had been created.

The new bloc played an important role in the government crisis in August, 1944, when it showed unanimity in opposing Premier Mohammed Sa'ed's cabinet and in according a vote of confidence to the new cabinet headed by the same premier. In 1945 the bloc made common cause with Seyyid Zia's group. Both constituted a powerful

anti-Communist majority opposed to Soviet influence. The minority included then the Tudeh group and a number of deputies amenable to Soviet persuasion. The latter were mainly those whose estates or business establishments were under Soviet occupation.

In the spring and the summer of 1945 the issues before the Majlis centered around the candidacy for premiership. The Soviet-influenced minority tried to obstruct the proceedings of the Majlis, especially at the time of cabinet crises, or to oppose those candidates for the post of premier who were unacceptable to Russia.

A weapon commonly used by the minority was abstention from the meetings of the Majlis whenever the majority was about to carry